



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
JUDICIAL ETHICS COMMITTEE
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

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Court of Appeals

JOSEPH H. ECKERT
Circuit Court

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JUDICIAL ETHICS OPINION JE-6

Formal

Question: May a group of judicial candidates run for election on the same ticket?

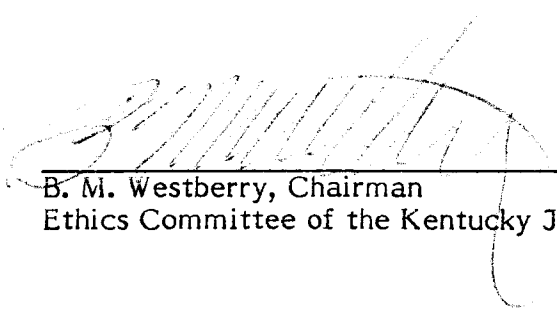
Answer: No.

Reference: SCR 4.300, Canon 7A(1).

OPINION: Canon 7A(1) states in part: "A judge or a candidate for election to judicial office should not . . . (b) Make speeches for a political organization **or publicly endorse a candidate for public office.**" (Emphasis added)

A judgeship is a public office, and the Canon by its terms applies to all public offices. It does not make any exception for judicial candidates nor for non-partisan elections. Endorsement of a judicial candidate by a judge or another judicial candidate is in direct conflict with this Canon. See Judicial Ethics Opinion JE-2.

The question thus becomes whether running with other candidates on a ticket constitutes endorsement of such candidates. A majority of this Committee thinks that it does. It may be assumed that a candidate would be unwilling to run with persons of whom he disapproves; therefore, running with another candidate necessarily implies endorsement of that candidate and is therefore forbidden by Canon 7A(1).



B. M. Westberry, Chairman
Ethics Committee of the Kentucky Judiciary

May 29, 1980